

USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

**AMERICA'S WAR ON COCAINE:  
THE NATIONAL DRUG CONTROL  
SUPPLY REDUCTION STRATEGY**

by

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This SRP is submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the Master of Strategic Studies Degree. The views expressed in this student academic research paper are those of the author and do not reflect the official policy or position of the Department of the Army, Department of Defense, or the U.S. Government.

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## ABSTRACT

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This strategic research project will examine the history of America's war on cocaine with a specific focus on the U.S. National Drug Control Policy and the national strategy to reduce the supply of cocaine available to American citizens including the most current initiative, Plan Colombia. Finally, this project recommends expanding on the successes of Plan Colombia into a regional effort to address the global aspects of the drug trade.



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT.....	iii
AMERICA'S WAR ON COCAINE: THE NATIONAL DRUG CONTROL SUPPLY REDUCTION STRATEGY .....	1
THE COCAINE THREAT.....	1
THE NATIONAL DRUG CONTROL POLICY.....	3
SUPPLY REDUCTION STRATEGY .....	3
CONTEMPORARY SUPPLY REDUCTION EFFORTS .....	6
PRESIDENT BUSH AND ONDCP .....	6
THE CLINTON SHIFT IN PRIORITY .....	8
CURRENT STRATEGY.....	9
ENDNOTES .....	13
BIBLIOGRAPHY .....	17



## **AMERICA'S WAR ON COCAINE: THE NATIONAL DRUG CONTROL SUPPLY REDUCTION STRATEGY**

Illegal drug use threatens everything that is good about our country. It can break the bonds between parents and children. It can turn productive citizens into addicts, and it can transform schools into places of violence and chaos. Internationally, it finances the work of terrorists who use drug profits to fund their murderous work. Our fight against illegal drug use is a fight for our children's future, for struggling democracies, and against terrorism.

- President George W. Bush<sup>1</sup>

In the year 2000, there were 50,000 drug-related deaths in the U. S. and the U. S. suffered \$160 billion in economic losses due to illicit drug use<sup>2</sup>. The 2002 Interagency Assessment of Cocaine Movement (IACM) estimates that the annual U. S. consumption of cocaine exceeds 300 metric tons. To satisfy this demand for the illicit drug, the IACM estimates that over 500 metric tons of cocaine is shipped from South America to the U. S. annually<sup>3</sup>. Currently, 16 million Americans use drugs and approximately six million meet the clinical criteria for needing drug treatment<sup>4</sup>. In 2002, 25% of high school seniors reported using illegal drugs in the last month and 10% of eighth graders reported using illegal drugs in the last month<sup>5</sup>.

Despite these alarming statistics, some characterize illicit drug use in America as a minor problem affecting less than 10% of the population. However, America's drug problem is much more pervasive and impacts more than just the anonymous user of illicit drugs. The international illicit drug trade generates over \$400 billion in trade annually, equal to roughly 8% of global trade<sup>6</sup>. Drug traffickers earn a profit margin of 300% on their investment<sup>7</sup>. The cultivation, transportation and distribution of illicit drugs are a global industry whose profits fuel international crime, global terrorism and threaten to destabilize national governments.

This strategic research project will examine the history of America's war on cocaine with a specific focus on the U.S. National Drug Control Policy and the national strategy to reduce the supply of cocaine available to American citizens including the most current initiative, Plan Colombia. Finally, this project recommends expanding on the successes of Plan Colombia into a regional effort to address the global aspects of the drug trade.

### **THE COCAINE THREAT**

Cocaine is the most potent and addictive stimulant found in nature<sup>8</sup>. It is a stimulant that immediately and directly affects the brain and is physically and psychologically addictive. Cocaine is ingested by snorting (through the nose), smoking or injecting intravenously. Its short-lived but intense stimulation - 15-30 minutes by snorting, 5-10 minutes from smoking – is



the key element in its addictive power<sup>9</sup>. The stimulant effects quickly wear off and are often followed by intense depression. Many addicts report getting “hooked” after a single use.

While cocaine has been ingested by humans for thousands of years, cocaine in its pure form was first produced in the late 1880's as an anesthetic for eye and throat surgery. Pure cocaine is a white crystalline powder that is extracted from the leaves of the erythroxylon coca bush found primarily in the Andean region of South America<sup>10</sup>. By the early twentieth century cocaine was an ingredient in many over-the-counter elixirs and patent medicines. As more was learned about the additive and destructive properties of the cocaine, the federal government began to step in.

U.S. government attempts at drug control policy began in the early 1900's with the Pure Food and Drug Act, which mandated the accurate labeling of patent medicinal ingredients such as cocaine and opiates, prohibited interstate transport of cocaine and placed limits on importation of leaves.<sup>11</sup> The Harrison Act followed in 1914 and was the first federal regulation of narcotic drugs. Specifically, it banned the sale of cocaine without a medical prescription and prohibited trace amounts of cocaine in over-the-counter medicines. Due to the Harrison Act and the introduction of cheaper, legal stimulants such as amphetamines, cocaine use significantly declined and was not a national issue from the 1920's through the 1960's<sup>12</sup>.

Cocaine use began to rise again in the late 1960's and in 1970 the federal government designated cocaine as a Schedule II controlled substance. Schedule II substances are defined as substances that have a high potential for abuse, have a currently accepted medical use for treatment, with significant restrictions, and that may be physically and psychologically addictive<sup>13</sup>. By the late 1970's cocaine had begun to replace marijuana as the drug of choice in America.

As federal government interdiction and eradication efforts began to impact marijuana trafficking, the illicit drug industry shifted its efforts to the cultivation, transportation and distribution of cocaine. Compared to marijuana, cocaine was more compact, more easily transported and more addictive. Drug trafficker profits soared. By the early 1980's cocaine was the fashionable drug of the celebrity elite and was produced at a retail price that middle class America could afford. The introduction of “crack” cocaine – an easily smokeable cocaine derivative that produced an intense “high” and was highly addictive- in 1986 drove cocaine use by America to levels never seen with any other drug. Since its reintroduction to American society in the late 1970's, cocaine continues to be the drug of choice for most American users of illicit drugs.

Current U.S. demand for cocaine is roughly 300 metric tons annually<sup>14</sup>. Over the last five years demand has been relatively stable. The price and purity of the drug have remained fairly stable over this period as well<sup>15</sup>. To meet this demand, the Interagency Assessment of Cocaine Movement estimates that approximately 544 metric tons of cocaine departed South America for the U. S. in 2002. This amount is relatively stable compared to 2000 and 2001. Of the 544 metric tons leaving South America, it is estimated that approximately 192 metric tons were seized or consumed enroute to the U.S., leaving 352 metric tons available in the U.S. market to satisfy a 300 metric ton demand.<sup>16</sup>

## **THE NATIONAL DRUG CONTROL POLICY**

Since the inception of U.S. drug control policies, strategies have followed two distinct avenues – demand reduction and supply reduction – rooted in the classical economic theories of supply and demand.<sup>17</sup> Demand reduction is centered on education, prevention and treatment.<sup>18</sup> The focus of demand reduction is the drug consumer in the belief that if there is no demand, supply won't matter. Supply reduction is centered on law enforcement, interdiction and eradication of drugs at their source.<sup>19</sup> Supply reduction is focused on the drug producer, exporter and salesman.

Most stated U.S. drug control policies have maintained that a balanced approach, including both supply reduction and demand reduction, is the proper strategy, but there has always been considerable tension between the two theories of drug control. However, rhetoric aside, over the last century most government efforts and funding have concentrated on supply reduction.

## **SUPPLY REDUCTION STRATEGY**

Supply reduction efforts are focused on limiting and ultimately eliminating the supply of illicit drugs available for use by private citizens. As complete elimination of the availability of illicit drugs is usually an unattainable goal, supply reduction efforts are focused on limiting the availability of the drug or driving the retail price of the drug so high that it is not possible for most citizens to obtain the drug. The primary efforts of supply reduction are eradication of the drug at its source, interdiction of the drug while in transit from the source zone to the U.S., and interdiction by local law enforcement with the U.S.

These supply reduction efforts are focused in three geographic areas: the source zone (nominally South America), the transit zone (the water and land between South America and the U.S. borders), and the arrival zone (area within U.S. borders). While complete application of the

theory of defense in depth, a maximum effort across all three zones, would likely be the most effective strategy, limited resources have prevented a simultaneous all-out effort.

Eradication efforts are concentrated in the source zone and are generally accomplished by one of two methods. The first method is manual eradication in which the plants are uprooted and destroyed by hand. This method is labor intensive and not very efficient considering the number of acres of coca plants that need to be destroyed to impact cocaine production. The second method is aerial eradication using small airplanes to spray herbicides that kill the coca plants. While this method is highly effective and significantly more efficient than manual eradication, it can be hampered by the mountainous growing terrain and is somewhat controversial due to its impact on the local environment and citizenry. Eradication efforts are further complicated because such activities require the support and cooperation of the nation in which the plants grow. Eradication is usually not a stand alone effort. It is generally coupled with stepped-up interdiction efforts – of both drugs and drug processing labs- in the source country and some form of alternative crop development and financial aid.

Federal interdiction efforts are focused on the transit zone - roughly six million square miles of open water encompassing the Caribbean Sea, the Eastern Pacific Ocean and the waters surrounding Mexico. The IACM estimates that 93 percent of cocaine flows to the U. S. via non-commercial maritime conveyances, specifically in fishing vessels and small, high-speed boats known as “go-fasts”.<sup>20</sup> There are very few direct shipments of illicit drugs from the source zone to the U. S.; most shipments are two-part transits. The primary movement is via go-fast or fishing vessel to Central America, Mexico or various Caribbean islands. Drugs that arrive in Central America or Mexico are then carried overland to the U. S. Drugs that arrive in the Caribbean islands are then concealed in coastal freighters carrying legitimate cargo to the U. S.

Focusing transit zone efforts on interdicting the primary movement of drugs avoids the international complications of overland interdiction in Latin America and the man-hour intensive prospect of inspecting every coastal freighter arriving in South Florida ports. Focusing on primary movements also allows the U. S. to conduct interdiction operations in international waters, avoiding the intricacies of international cooperation. Additionally, to address traditional trafficker safe havens in the territorial waters of the smaller states bordering the transit zone, the U. S. government has completed bilateral counterdrug agreements with most of these states. These agreements allow the U.S. to conduct counterdrug operations in the territorial waters of these states.

The negative side of transit zone interdiction is that it is asset intensive. Patrolling the sea lanes requires significant numbers of large ships (Coast Guard and Navy (with Coast Guard law

enforcement detachments embarked)) and long range maritime patrol aircraft. Further complicating this effort is that existing counterdrug assets are continually redirected to homeland security missions (Coast Guard) and forward deployments (Navy). As a result of this dilution of counterdrug assets, Coast Guard transit zone seizures of cocaine dropped from approximately 69 metric tons in FY2001 to approximately 58 metric tons in FY2002.<sup>21</sup>

A third alternative is to focus solely on arrival zone interdiction, essentially creating a line of law enforcement officials linked arm-in-arm along the borders and coastline. This course of action may present the greatest risk of all alternatives as it forgoes the benefits of defense in depth and establishes a first and last line of defense at the U. S. borders and ports of entry. At first blush, the primary benefit appears to be the concentration of effort in the one zone in which the U.S. government controls all aspects of interdiction execution and enforcement. However, this control may be more illusory than actual, as historically coordination between federal, state and local authorities has been problematic.

The creation of the Department of Homeland Security and incumbent restructuring of U. S. Customs, the Immigration and Naturalization Service, and the Border Patrol could mitigate these issues; however, federal coordination with state and local authorities and the implementation of joint efforts are still in the developmental stage. Additionally, the sheer breadth of U. S. borders and coastline would require the dedication of a significant number of assets and personnel to create an impermeable last line of defense. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, a lock-down on the borders would have significant economic impact on commerce. The time required for an all-out arrival zone inspection effort would slow cross-border trade to a crawl. For a number of reasons, resource requirements, coordination issues and economic impact, a focus solely on the arrival zone is not practical at this time. However, as the new homeland security organization matures, this zone does have the greatest potential for improved success.

A final point to be considered is that the cultivation of coca, the production of cocaine, and the distribution of refined cocaine is a business based on profit. Further, those involved in this industry are good businessmen who will react to any government initiatives in a business-like fashion. As long as a substantial profit margin exists, traffickers will respond to government efforts. For every government led parry there will be a trafficker counter-parry. If the government is successful against one mode of transportation in the transit zone, traffickers will shift to another mode - as when they shifted from larger fishing vessels to go-fasts in the Caribbean. If host nation eradication efforts are beginning to show success, the traffickers will shift their growing operations to a country that is less cooperative with the U.S. or does not have

the internal will to conduct earnest eradication. As traffickers are pure businessmen who are not concerned with procurement regulations, interagency consensus and international cooperation, they often are several steps ahead of government initiatives. In the vernacular of the drug industry, this is known as the “balloon effect”; that is, if government efforts push the cocaine industry out of one area it will move and appear in another area.

### **CONTEMPORARY SUPPLY REDUCTION EFFORTS**

Contemporary supply reduction efforts began with President Reagan’s announcement of a “War on Drugs” in the early 1980’s. The Reagan years were highlighted by a significant increase in supply reduction spending by the federal government – tripling the supply reduction funding from \$437 million to \$1.4 billion.<sup>22</sup> Most of this increased funding was spent on enhancing domestic law efforts, including enforcement of the 1986 Anti-Drug Abuse Act “Zero Tolerance” program.<sup>23</sup> Other Reagan initiatives included a limited effort in the countries producing cocaine, increased at-sea interdiction efforts, and modification of the Posse Comitatus Act of 1878 in 1986. The Posse Comitatus Act prohibited the U. S. Army (by derivative extension the U.S. Air Force and by Department of Defense policy, the U.S. Navy and Marines) from conducting domestic law enforcement. Public Law 97-86 amended the Posse Comitatus Act to allow DoD to give limited support to federal law enforcement agencies in the area of counterdrug cooperation/operations.

Despite the increased funding, policy and legislative initiatives and stepped up enforcement, the flow of cocaine showed little signs of abating. There are two probable causes for this lack of success: (1) federal efforts were sporadic and uncoordinated and (2) the Reagan international initiative in the source zone was a U.S.-centric effort that treated South American countries as enemies rather than as partners in the anti-drug effort. Over the next ten years, these weaknesses were recognized and addressed by succeeding administrations. First, the Bush Administration created the Office of National Drug Control Policy to coordinate federal, state and local anti-drug efforts. Following that, the Clinton Administration changed the focus of the international source zone effort to one that partnered with South American countries to address cocaine production.

### **PRESIDENT BUSH AND ONDCP**

The Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) was established as a cabinet level agency by President George Bush in 1989 in response to the public outcry regarding the nation’s cocaine epidemic. As American cocaine use grew throughout the 1980’s, the nation’s counterdrug effort grew to address this threat to America. However, this growth in effort –

signaled by increasing national funding – was not a coordinated one, but rather individual attempts by disparate agencies to address a national issue. Federal agencies responsible for law enforcement, interdiction and prevention had overlapping responsibilities and often competed with each other<sup>24</sup>. State and local authorities had no national policy guidance and often lacked the resources necessary to address this complex issue<sup>25</sup>.

President Bush's speech to the American people in 1989 signaled a new coordinated approach to this threat: "America's fight against illegal drug use cannot be won on any single front alone; it must be waged everywhere – at every level of government – Federal, State and local – and by every citizen in every community across the country."<sup>26</sup> The emphasis was that national, not federal drug policy was required and that ONDCP would establish policies, priorities, and goals for the national drug control program by publishing the National Drug Control Strategy. The Strategy would direct national anti-drug efforts and establish a national program, a national budget, and guidelines for cooperation among Federal, State, and local entities<sup>27</sup>.

The primary cocaine supply reduction efforts of the first Bush Drug Control Strategy were focused on international initiatives and interdiction efforts. International priorities included: (1) Disruption and dismantlement of drug trafficking organizations; (2) Reduced cocaine supply – law enforcement, military, and economic assistance will be provided to the three Andean cocaine-producing countries to isolate major coca-growing areas; to block delivery of chemicals used for cocaine processing; to destroy cocaine-hydrochloride processing labs; and to dismantle the trafficking organizations.<sup>28</sup> Cocaine interdiction priorities included: (1) Development of a comprehensive information-based approach to federal air, maritime, land and port-of-entry interdiction; (2) Concentration on high-value individuals and shipments; and (3) Enhanced border systems, operations, and activities.<sup>29</sup>

International efforts focused on U.S. leadership of an international anti-drug coalition aimed at aggressively combating the drug producers and traffickers. The U.S. encouraged source and transit nations to strengthen their anti-conspiracy and asset forfeiture laws and to increase the effectiveness of their enforcement and security efforts. Specific initiatives included: providing enhanced training to Colombian security forces; providing assistance to Bolivia to disrupt the coca trade in the Chapare Valley; supporting Mexico's Northern Border Response Force; and providing support to Central American and Caribbean nations aimed at disrupting drug transshipments occurring in these countries.<sup>30</sup>

Interdiction efforts focused on a strategy of route denial, employing U.S. interdiction forces to prevent drugs from reaching the U.S. by denying smugglers the use of air, maritime and land

routes to the U.S. Specific initiatives included: creating the National Counter-Drug Planning Process to streamline the command and control of federal interdiction assets regardless of agency affiliation; engaging the U.S. military forces in the "War on Drugs" by establishing the Department of Defense (DoD) as the lead agency for the detection and monitoring (D&M) of suspected drug trafficking conveyances and enhancing DoD's role in training and assisting federal law enforcement agencies; and developing strong enforcement measures for precursor chemicals.<sup>31</sup>

The interdiction efforts were very successful. Within one year of the establishment of Joint Task Force Four (DoD's lead D&M coordination command), the number of drug shipments decreased by one-third and the smuggler success rate fell from 80 percent to 10 percent.<sup>32</sup> In fiscal year 1991, federal law enforcement and interdiction agencies seized 239,048 pounds of cocaine.<sup>33</sup> However, despite these successes there was little change in the price or purity level of cocaine on U.S. streets.<sup>34</sup>

### **THE CLINTON SHIFT IN PRIORITY**

Prior to the Clinton Administration the focus of the national effort was maritime interdiction in the transit zone. Following a White House directed review of the federal anti-drug effort, the strategy shifted from transit zone interdiction to disrupting the market in the source zone.

"The Strategy also challenges us to change the way we look at international drug control programs. International drug trafficking is a criminal activity that threatens democratic institutions, fuels terrorism and human rights abuses, and undermines economic development. Anti-drug efforts must be an integral part of our foreign policy when dealing with major source and transit countries, equal to the worldwide commitment that the United States devotes to the promotion of democracy, human rights, and economic development." - Bill Clinton<sup>35</sup>

While there have been modifications in the source zone tactical effort due to the shifting of the center of gravity of cocaine production from Peru to Colombia, the emphasis of effort (strategy) has remained the same: "Targeting the archer (cocaine production) rather than the arrows (transit zone shipments)".<sup>36</sup>

The specific goals of the Clinton strategy were: (1) dismantling cartels; (2) assisting law enforcement officials in source nations; and (3) redirecting interdiction efforts from the transit zone to source nations.<sup>37</sup> In accordance with these priorities, the federal effort was focused on the source zone. In 1994, the majority of coca was cultivated in Peru and transported to Colombia for processing via small aircraft. The first initiative of the Clinton Administration was to break the Peru to Colombia "air bridge". After several false starts, the U.S.-supported Peruvian interdictions had great effect – the air bridge was broken. Coca cultivation fell in Peru

as farmer's profits evaporated since they had no means of transporting their product to market. The success was short-lived, as traffickers adapted and began to shift the primary growing areas for coca to Colombia – eliminating the need for an air bridge. Colombia was the logical choice for the shift as it offered a similar growing environment and was a country in internal chaos with little law enforcement capability.

By the late 1990's, over 90% of the cocaine transported to the U.S was either grown or processed in Colombia. In 2000 the Government of Colombia developed a strategy to reverse this troubling trend. Plan Colombia, the details of which are provided in the next section, was accepted by the Clinton Administration as a viable strategy towards curbing Colombian cocaine production and the Administration provided the requested U.S. financial and military support.

## **CURRENT STRATEGY**

The primary goals of the current National Drug Control Strategy are to reduce illicit drug use in the United States by 10 percent in two years and 25 percent in five years.<sup>38</sup> The Strategy is built on three core priorities to attain these goals: Stopping drug use before it starts; Healing America's drug users; and Disrupting the market.<sup>39</sup> In ONDCP parlance, the first two priorities are labeled demand reduction and third priority is labeled supply reduction. The FY 2003 federal drug control spending of \$11.7 billion is split fairly evenly between demand reduction (47%) and supply reduction (53%).<sup>40</sup>

The current supply reduction strategy, "Disrupting the Market", continues the focus on the source zone, specifically Colombia. According to ONDCP, 90% of the cocaine entering the U.S. originates or passes through Colombia.<sup>41</sup> This is a significant shift from the mid-nineties when the majority of cocaine originated in Peru. Given this 90% figure, the preponderance of the source zone effort in Colombia appears to be a sound concept. However, it is important to note that the shift from Peru to Colombia was the result of U. S. support to Peru interdiction and eradication efforts, as this indicates the fluidity of the source zone market and reveals a potential weakness of source zone effort.

Before examining the specific ways and means applied to the supply reduction strategy in the source zone, it is important to examine the links of this strategy to the national consumption reduction goals. A careful reading of the Strategy reveals no link or published measurement device to determine if the supply reduction strategy is actually reducing national drug use. This is a marked change from the previous administration's National Drug Control Strategy which provided federal agencies with specific targets to reduce the amount of cocaine flowing to the U. S.



In the absence of this guidance, federal agencies responsible for supply reduction efforts have adopted their own measures of success. Some directly translate the drug use reduction goals into supply reduction goals, e.g. a ten percent reduction in the supply of drugs over the next two years and a reduction of 25% over the next five years. However, this practice allows agencies to employ different baselines and measures of drugs in transit. While this may represent agency initiative, it results in differing measurement standards which open strategy effectiveness to challenges from all sides. If the science of the correlation between drug supply and drug use is not sufficiently advanced to allow empirical supply reduction goals, other means of measurement should be explored. The Strategy should codify individual agency measurement attempts into a uniform standard or adapt a proxy measurement such as street value of cocaine in major cities to provide a nominal gauge of strategy effectiveness. This lack of linkage to national consumption reduction goals represents a significant flaw in the Strategy at large as it does not provide a means to measure success relative to a core priority that consumes over half of the federal drug control resources.

The focus of the current supply reduction strategy is to disrupt all aspects of the cocaine market in Colombia while maintaining a holding effort in the transit and arrival zones. Since 2001, the primary ways and means applied to this objective have been U.S. support of the Government of Colombia's Plan Colombia. To date, the U.S. has provided over \$2.5 billion in military, economic and humanitarian assistance.<sup>42</sup> The main goals of Plan Colombia are: (1) Reduce the production and distribution of illegal drugs through eradication of coca crops, alternative economic development for coca farmers, seizures of illegal drugs and destruction of the drug traffickers infrastructure; (2) Build and strengthen public institutions and increase the State's presence throughout Colombia through reform of the judicial system, combating corruption and strengthening the Colombian Armed Forces; (3) Revitalize the economy by expanding international trade and increasing foreign investment; and (4) Advance the Colombia peace process through negotiation with illegal armed groups operating in Colombia.<sup>43</sup>

Since 2001 there have been successes in each of these areas of emphasis. Record numbers of acres of coca have been eradicated, 320 tons of cocaine have been seized in Colombia, over 1,000 coca laboratories have been destroyed by the Colombian Armed Forces and over 22,000 farmers have given up growing coca and are participating in alternative development programs. Terrorist attacks have declined 53% since 2002 and kidnappings are down by 34%. Judicial reform is ongoing and for the first time there is a police presence in every municipality in Colombia. GNP is growing at a rate double that experienced before the implementation of Plan Colombia and unemployment has dropped two percent since 2002.

Progress on peace talks has been slow but the government controls more of Colombia than in 2001.<sup>44</sup>

While these Plan Colombia successes are significant, the impact of the source zone strategy on reducing the supply of cocaine in the U. S. remains questionable. In 1999, the IACM estimated that 486 metric tons of cocaine departed the source zone for the U. S. In 2002 the IACM estimate was 544 metric tons<sup>11</sup>. While these estimates are open to interpretation and are regularly revised, estimates of U. S. consumption demand remained steady at 300 metric tons annually over this period. Clearly, supply still exceeds demand. Additionally, the Drug Enforcement Administration Illegal Drug Price and Purity Report of December 2002 indicates that cocaine prices remained relatively low in major U. S. cities from 1998 to 2001 (2002 data not yet available) and that average purity, while decreasing from 69% to 53%, remained at relatively high levels during the same period<sup>12, 13</sup>. There is also evidence that previously abandoned coca growing areas in Peru and Bolivia are being re-cultivated in response to Colombia's aggressive eradication program.

These observations reinforce the notion that cocaine production is a dynamic business that ignores national boundaries and can quickly shift its production efforts in response to state counterdrug efforts. While the source zone emphasis through Plan Colombia has had some individual successes in stabilizing Colombia, it appears to have had little impact on the availability of cocaine on the streets of U. S. cities. However, the successes in Colombia are real and could be used as a foundation to expand the source zone strategy to a regional effort that could address the dynamic nature of cocaine production more effectively.

Reducing the amount of illicit drugs entering the U. S. is a complex issue with no "one size fits all" solution. While the source, transit and arrival zones each offer opportunities for success, available resources do not permit an effective effort in all three simultaneously. A priority of effort must be established. The successes in supporting Plan Colombia, while limited in scope, are real and may provide a blueprint for a source zone regional plan that could significantly reduce the amount of cocaine available for shipment to the U. S. Success in the transit zone requires interdiction assets that are not currently available. Success in the arrival zone requires unprecedented levels of cooperation and execution between federal, state and local authorities and could carry a high economic price.

If an infusion of additional resources was forthcoming, reinvigorating the transit zone efforts would probably offer the most potential for the federal effort. As maritime smugglers (of any item) use similar tactics enhancing transit zone interdiction effectiveness would by extension enhance the nation's homeland security efforts. The primary focus of any additional

effort in the transit zone should be to establish complete maritime domain awareness (MDA) of all maritime approaches to the U.S. MDA is a knowledge or awareness of all activity in a given maritime sector. Complete MDA would require more surface and air assets for detection and monitoring, enhanced intelligence from all points of departure bound for the U.S. and better coordination among government and shipping industry agencies to sort and identify detected vessels. Once complete MDA is established, interdiction would become more effective as interdiction assets could focus their efforts against vessels that are not identified by the MDA scheme. However, given the resources lists above, complete MDA is an expensive and complicated endeavor.

Finally, given current resources the current supply reduction strategy of focusing on the source zone while maintaining a holding action in the transit and arrival zone appears to be the most effective way to reduce the availability of cocaine in the U. S. However, where resources allow, the successes of Plan Colombia should be incorporated into a regional strategy to more effectively address the dynamic nature of cocaine production. Two other issues also merit consideration. First, a national standard to measure the effectiveness of the supply reduction effort must be developed. This measure should be linked to the national goals on consumption reduction. Second, special attention should be given to the development of the nation's homeland security organization. Once mature, this organization may offer the greatest potential for future success in reducing the amount of cocaine entering the U. S.

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## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> George W. Bush. Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents. Washington, D.C.: Feb18 2002. Vol 38, Iss 7; pg. 223. President George W. Bush statement to Congress introducing 2002 National Drug Control Strategy.

<sup>2</sup> State Department, *Report to Congress, Objectives of US Policy: U. S. Policy Towards Colombia and Other Issues*, (Washington, D.C.: State Department, December 2003), pg. 3.

<sup>3</sup> Defense Intelligence Agency, *Interagency Assessment of Cocaine Movement*, (Washington, D.C.: DIA, 2002).

<sup>4</sup> ONDCP, *National Drug Control Strategy, Update*, (White House: Executive Office of the President, February 2003), pg. 2.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> United Nations Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention, *Economic and Social Consequences of Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking* (New York, N.Y.: UNODCCP, 1998) p.3.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> NIDA Cocaine Information Web Page, (Available from <http://www.nida.nih.gov>), accessed 10 October, 2003

<sup>9</sup> Ibid

<sup>10</sup> Ibid

<sup>11</sup> Leif Roderick Rosenberger, *America's Drug War Debacle*, (Aldershot, England: Ashgate Publishing Ltd, 1996)

<sup>12</sup> NIDA Cocaine Information Web Page, (Available from <http://www.nida.nih.gov>), accessed 10 October, 2003

<sup>13</sup> ONDCP, *Policy Web Page*, (Available from <http://www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov/publications/policy/ndcs03/overview.html>), 1 May 2003), Accessed 22 September 2003.

<sup>14</sup> Defense Intelligence Agency, *Interagency Assessment of Cocaine Movement*, (Washington, D.C.: DIA, 2002).

<sup>15</sup> DEA

<sup>16</sup> Defense Intelligence Agency, *Interagency Assessment of Cocaine Movement*, (Washington, D.C.: DIA, 2002).

<sup>17</sup> ONDCP, *National Drug Control Strategy* (White House: Executive Office of the President, September 1989), 12.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid

<sup>20</sup> Defense Intelligence Agency, *Interagency Assessment of Cocaine Movement*, (Washington, D.C.: DIA, 2002).

<sup>21</sup> <sup>15</sup>Shane Harris, *The Forgotten War*, (Washington, D.C.: Government Executive, May 2003, Vol. 35, Iss. 6), 48

<sup>22</sup> Leif Roderick Rosenberger, *America's Drug War Debacle*, (Aldershot, England: Ashgate Publishing Ltd, 1996) 26

<sup>23</sup> Ibid p.27

<sup>24</sup> ONDCP, *National Drug Control Strategy, Progress in the War on Drugs 1989-1992*, (White House: Executive Office of the President, January 1993), 1.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid

<sup>28</sup> ONDCP, *National Drug Control Strategy* (White House: Executive Office of the President, September 1989), 60.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid, p. 7

<sup>30</sup> ONDCP, *National Drug Control Strategy, Progress in the War on Drugs 1989-1992*, (White House: Executive Office of the President, January 1993), 27-29

<sup>31</sup> Ibid. 24-26

<sup>32</sup> Alexander Moore, *Caribbean Boundary: U.S. Atlantic Command Support of Counterdrug Operations 1989-1997*, (Norfolk, VA: Office of Command Historian, U.S. Joint Forces Command, December, 2000) 56

<sup>33</sup> ONDCP, *National Drug Control Strategy, Progress in the War on Drugs 1989-1992*, (White House: Executive Office of the President, January 1993), 24

<sup>34</sup> Leif Roderick Rosenberger, *America's Drug War Debacle*, (Aldershot, England: Ashgate Publishing Ltd, 1996) 31

<sup>35</sup> ONDCP, *National Drug Control Strategy*, (White House: Executive Office of the President, February 1994), iii

<sup>36</sup> Shkor, John, RADM USCG, Address to Quarterly J-3/USIC Conference, Washington, D.C., 1998.

<sup>37</sup> Alexander Moore, *Caribbean Boundary: U.S. Atlantic Command Support of Counterdrug Operations 1989-1997*, (Norfolk, VA: Office of Command Historian, U.S. Joint Forces Command, December, 2000) 57

<sup>38</sup> ONDCP, *National Drug Control Strategy, Update*, (White House: Executive Office of the President, February 2003), 4. Progress towards these goals will be measured from the 2002 *National Household Survey on Drug Abuse*.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., 2-4.

<sup>40</sup> ONDCP, *Policy Web Page*, (Available from <http://www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov/publications/policy/ndcs03/overview.html>), 1 May 2003), Accessed 22 September 2003.

<sup>41</sup> ONDCP, *National Drug Control Strategy, Update*, (White House: Executive Office of the President, February 2003), 33.

<sup>42</sup> Embassy of Colombia, *Plan Colombia*, (Washington, D.C.: Embassy of Colombia, July 2003), 1

<sup>43</sup> Ibid., 1-3.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid., 4-10.



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